



NSPS Newsletter

AF National Security Personnel System Office
20 March 2006

Volume 3, Number 2

Current Status

Spiral 1.1 to Implement NSPS on 30 April 2006

The Department of Defense (DoD) is moving forward with the implementation of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS). The first spiral, which includes about 3,000 nonbargaining unit GS/GM employees in the Air Force Audit Agency, SAF/MR, and elements at Tinker Air Force Base, is scheduled to deploy 30 April 2006.

Although court action prevents DoD from implementing the labor-management portion of NSPS, key elements of the human resources (HR) portion, including job classification, compensation, performance management, staffing, and workforce shaping, will be implemented.

Employees in Spiral 1.1 will have their initial payout under the performance-based compensation system in January 2007.

Spiral 1.2 and 1.3 participants will be identified shortly.

Lawsuit Status

Federal Court Rules on NSPS provisions

On 27 February 2006, Judge Emmet G. Sullivan issued a decision in the case of AFGE v. Rumsfeld regarding the legality of certain provisions of NSPS.

Judge Sullivan ruled that DoD and the Office of Personnel Management satisfied their statutory obligation to collaborate with the unions in developing NSPS and that DoD lawfully has the authority to depart from Chapter 71 in establishing a new labor relations system. However, Judge Sullivan also found the NSPS labor relations system fails to ensure that employees can bargain collectively, the National Security Labor Relations Board does not meet Congressional requirement for independent third party review of labor relations decisions, and the process for appealing adverse actions fails to provide employees with 'fair treatment', as required by Congress.

As a result, the Court has permanently enjoined DoD from implementing Discipline and Adverse Actions (Subpart G), Appeals (Subpart H) and Labor Relations (Subpart I) of the proposed NSPS program. NSPS performance management, classification, compensation, staffing, and workforce shaping are unaffected by the ruling and will be implemented as scheduled.

Performance Management

DoD has re-evaluated the proposed NSPS performance management system to make it easier to use and more transparent to employees. A workgroup convened by the NSPS Program Executive Office (PEO) refined the system design to make job objectives—the ‘what’ an employee does—the primary focus. Manner of performance—the ‘how’ work is accomplished—will also be considered in the rating process.

The changes have been approved by senior management and will be implemented with Spiral 1.1. NSPS-specific training has been updated to include the new approach; employees and supervisors will receive appropriate training on performance management, as well as other key NSPS topics, prior to deployment.



Job objectives define “what” the employee does. These objectives may be written jointly by the employee and supervisor and are designed to communicate specific individual, team, or organizational responsibilities and expected contributions with related outcomes and accomplishments. They draw a line of sight between the employee’s work, the work unit’s goal, and the organization’s success: they are results-oriented and mission-focused. Objectives are based on the ‘*SMART*’ approach:

Specific – A job should have an expected outcome to be accomplished that can be clearly and unambiguously defined so that all concerned understand precisely what outcome, action, or behavior is required.

Measurable – A method or procedure must be in place that allows tracking, recording, and validation of quality of a specific behavior or action

Attainable/Achievable – The level of performance can be completed as specified

Realistic/Relevant – Objectives can be realistically reached with the time, available resources and personnel available, and the outcome or results of the program directly support the organization’s objective

Timed – Objectives can be obtained within specified time parameters.

Job Objectives are rated on a five-point scale, with 5 indicating a highly successful employee and 1 indicating an unsuccessful one.

Contributing factors define ‘how’ the work is done. Each job objective is supported by one or more contributing factors that define the attributes of job performance significant to the accomplishment of that objective. Standard DoD factors include *technical proficiency, critical thinking, cooperation and teamwork, communication, customer focus, resource management, and leadership*. Contributing factors may be used to adjust the rating for each job objective unless an employee receives a rating of ‘unacceptable’ for that job objective.

Training

NSPS-specific training has been revised to incorporate the changes to the performance management system and will resume in April. First to be trained will be the 3,000 employees in Spiral 1.1.

The PEO developed Career Group cards (4x6) that give a summary of the career groups and help explain the concept of pay bands and pay schedules. Each participant in Spiral 1.1 will receive a set of these cards. The PEO also developed an HR Magazine that will be provided at the HR auditorium briefing for managers, supervisors, and employees.

This training material has been posted to the AF NSPS Community of Practice web site and is available for major command and installation NSPS points of contact to download and distribute.

AF Web Site

The Air Force NSPS website has moved.

To make the information we post to the website accessible to as many viewers as possible, we have moved it to the *Air Force Link* server. The pages are now available from any computer.

The new address is <http://www.af.mil/library/nsps-af/index.asp>.

Back Issues

To view previous editions of the NSPS Newsletter, visit the [AF NSPS website](#).

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